

**CONGRESSMAN SHERWOOD BOEHLERT (R-NY) FLOOR STATEMENT ON  
INTRODUCTION OF *H.R. 1674, U.S. Tsunami Warning and Education Act***

April 18, 2005

Mr. Speaker, I rise today (along with my colleague Mr. Inslee from Washington State) to introduce the U.S. Tsunami Warning and Education Act of 2005. On December 26 of last year, we all watched with horror and complete bewilderment as a massive tsunami swept across the Indian Ocean Basin ravaging 11 nations, killing more than 150,000 people, and affecting the day-to-day lives of millions.

This event was a wake up call for coastal communities around the world, and certainly for coastal communities in the U.S. While the U.S. does have a tsunami detection and warning system in the Pacific, this event forced us to reexamine that system and we found that most of the vulnerable communities in the U.S. are not adequately protected or prepared for a similar event.

The Administration responded quickly to the Indian Ocean Tsunami with a proposal in January to strengthen and expand the current U.S. tsunami detection and warning system. The Science Committee took the lead in Congress and held a hearing on the Administration's proposal and heard from experts who expressed some concerns about the Administration's proposal and had numerous recommendations to improve it.

We took the Administration's proposal and the comments from many experts and developed the U.S. Tsunami Warning and Education Act. The bill would authorize \$30 million a year for three years for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to: strengthen the current tsunami detection system in the Pacific and expand it to the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico regions; conduct a community-based tsunami hazard mitigation program to improve preparedness of at-risk areas; maintain a dedicated tsunami research program; and provide technical assistance and training to the international community on the development of a global tsunami detection and warning system.

While tsunamis are going to continue to threaten our coasts, this legislation ensures that we can be better prepared through early detection, instant warnings, and an educated population.